

2006 Local Accomplishments

AID FOR TOWNS IN THE 16TH SENATE DISTRICT

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 16th state Senate District is ensuring Waterbury, Wolcott, Southington and Cheshire receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

Total Education Grants	\$139,352,034	This funding is an increase of \$4,572,293 over last year's total
Extra 2006 Property Tax Relief	\$3,10,028	
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$1,213,416	
Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Grants	\$7,305,720	
Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP)	\$1,848,344	
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$16,241,203	
Total Statutory Formula Grants	\$169,130,744	



Announcing the Waterbury Health Access Program grant. Left to right: Dr. Peter Ellis, Leslie Swiderski, Senator Joan Hartley, John Tobin, myself and Representative Jeffrey Berger.

Keeping the Waterbury Health Access Program Open

This session, I led the effort to provide \$250,000 in new state funding for the groundbreaking Waterbury Health Access Program. This program, a collaboration between Waterbury area physicians, coordinates free care for uninsured and underinsured patients in Waterbury and surrounding towns. The federal funding was due to expire for this wonderful initiative this year, and without this new state funding, the program would have had to close its doors and hundreds of Waterbury area residents would have lost their healthcare. This grant will keep this innovative program open and running.

Turning On the Water in Waterbury and Wolcott

I worked hard to secure \$3.5 million in bond funding to increase the capacity of the Waterbury water system which serves customers in both Waterbury and Wolcott. This funding will allow Waterbury to make needed infrastructure improvements to reservoirs north of the city resulting in more water being available to the system's thousands of customers.

Grants for Cheshire and Southington

I successfully advocated for Small Town Economic Assistance Program grants for both Southington and Cheshire. In Cheshire, a \$500,000 grant will be used for streetscape improvements along the West Main Street commercial area. A \$195,000 grant for improvements to the Leach property and Canal Street has been awarded to Southington.

A Message to My Constituents



Dear Neighbor,

On May 3rd, the 2006 legislative session came to a close. For me, the victories we achieved on issues ranging from job creation to hospital safety were bittersweet since this was my last session as your state Senator. I have enjoyed every moment of my four years in the state Senate. I take very seriously the notion that you have entrusted me with your vote in the state Senate, and I leave the Senate with a great reverence for the value of public service.

That being said, I am glad that my last session was so productive. In this short newsletter, I'll try to give you a taste of our successes (and failures) during the 2006 session, and as always, I hope you will let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve you.

Every best wish, warmly,

Chris

Christopher S. Murphy
State Senator, 16th District

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting your district, please visit my Web site:
www.senatedems.ct.gov/Murphy.html



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I'm proud to represent the 16th state Senate District which includes the communities of Waterbury, Wolcott, Southington and Cheshire

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PRIORITY #1: GROWING AND PROTECTING JOBS

2006 Legislative Initiatives

Connecticut's economy is stagnant, and too many high-profile employers are laying off employees. That's why I worked with my colleagues to pass a bipartisan, historic jobs bill. Our innovative new approach to growing and protecting jobs invests in education, provides incentives for university/business partnerships, makes key transportation improvements, and harnesses the promise of emerging technologies such as fuel cells.

Highlights of our successful initiative include:

- **Elimination of the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment property tax** to attract more manufacturing jobs to Connecticut, especially the cutting-edge, precision manufacturing that is critical to our future economy
- **Linking promising new businesses to the university expertise** that can help bring innovative products to market
- **A Center for Entrepreneurship** that will assist promising technologies—including fuel cells—develop right here in our state
- **More funding for incumbent worker training programs**, provided by regional workforce development boards, to help workers learn new and valuable skills
- **Creation of business incubators to help grow the small business ideas** that will fuel our future economy and improve job creation across the state
- **Development Research and Economic Assistance Matching (DREAM) grants** that supplement and increase small businesses' access to federal research grants
- **Teacher 'externships' that help link the skills taught in classrooms to those sought by employers**, and providing opportunities for students to participate in internship and job-shadow experiences that will help them build relevant job skills

LOCAL HEROES



In April my colleagues and I honored Waterbury residents who volunteered with the American Red Cross and travelled to Louisiana to assist with relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina. From left to right: Steve Traver, Rich Winters, Judi Winters, Carol Karcheski, Robin McCarthy, myself, Nelson Medina and Bob Brown.

STATE SENATOR CHRISTOPHER MURPHY 16TH DISTRICT

2006 Legislative Report Card

Too often, elected officials just tell you about all the good things they do for you. I want to be different. That's why I am once again providing you with a legislative "Report Card" for the 2006 session. We did a lot of good this year, but we also didn't get everything done that we had hoped. And it's time legislators owned up to their failures as well as their successes. So here it is.

↑ Campaign Finance Reform and Ethics

We continued to strengthen our ethics laws in response to unprecedented corruption that occurred in our state. Legislation this year prohibits a governor's spouse from receiving honoraria and bans a governor from lobbying the state for at least one year after leaving office. We also continued to improve our strongest-in-the-nation campaign finance reform legislation by protecting the system's integrity in the event of a court challenge and further limiting political action committees (PACs).

↔ Cleaning Up State Contracting

To protect taxpayer dollars, I supported two similar bills in 2005 and 2006 that would have set up a "State Contracting Standards Board" to develop and oversee uniform state contracting standards. The bills would also have established temporary privatization standards for non-emergency contracts in excess of \$500,000 during the time that the new standards were being developed. Unfortunately, on both occasions, the governor vetoed this important last chapter on the contracting scandals uncovered during the Rowland administration.

↓ Eminent Domain

Eminent domain, the power of government to take private property for a public use or purpose, is a controversial, multi-faceted issue. Connecticut was thrust into the national spotlight with the recent case in the city of New London, also known as the *Kelo* case.

In this case, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the city and required the property owners involved to vacate their homes. As a result of the *Kelo* case, the legislature passed legislation creating the Office of Ombudsman for Property Rights, responsible for developing expertise in property rights law, assisting public agencies and providing property owners with information regarding eminent domain. I'm disappointed that stronger legislation wasn't enacted, but also appreciate the importance of this first step.



↑ Making Hospitals Safer

We have all heard about people who went into hospitals to get better, but unfortunately developed infections after being admitted. A new law will create a reporting system, providing the public with necessary information to compare infection rates at health care facilities in Connecticut. The system may also provide information about methods used to prevent the spread of infection. Beginning October 2008, this information will be published on a state Web site.

↑ Taking a Stand Against Underage Drinking

House parties pose a significant risk to our young people who consume alcohol on private property. The General Assembly passed a new law this session that makes it a crime to knowingly allow underage drinking on your private property or to do nothing to prevent such activity. This legislation also extends the law prohibiting the possession of alcohol by a minor on public property to all private property as well.

↔ Property Tax Reform

Connecticut's working families continue to struggle under the burden of an unfair local property tax that completely ignores one's ability to pay. Unfortunately, due to competing alternatives and time constraints, we did not accomplish all that we wished in this area. The legislature did provide some relief in the form of an increase in the property tax credit. The current credit is scheduled to increase from \$350 in 2005 to \$500 in 2006. However, without major reform soon, the current property tax system will continue to choke the residents of Connecticut's middle-income cities and towns. The current property tax system must be fixed.

↑ Importing Drugs from Canada

Increasingly, uninsured health care consumers are feeling that they are forced to buy drugs through Canadian pharmacies due to rising drug costs here in the United States. It's too bad some people believe they have to look abroad for cheap drugs, but there aren't many good alternatives if you don't have insurance. I was proud to chair a task force this session which examined the potential for the State to help consumers import prescription drugs from other countries. As a result of this study, funding was included in the new budget which we intend to be used by the Department of Public Health to survey existing importation programs and recommend the safest programs which consumers can access without legal consequence.

Improving Connecticut's Roads

The gridlock that clogs our highways poses a significant threat to Connecticut's economic future. The General Assembly passed groundbreaking legislation that makes major investments in mass transit and plans for our future transportation infrastructure. This new act provides \$1 billion for targeted transportation projects and commits \$1.3 billion for future projects including:

- Creation of the New Haven to Springfield Commuter Rail, creation of the New Britain to Hartford Busway and significant improvements to branch lines, rail stations and parking facilities on the New Haven Line and Shoreline East.
- The commissioning of several studies regarding the current state of our infrastructure and potential new initiatives, including targeted road expansions and commuter rail in Eastern Connecticut (New London to Worcester)

